

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT[281]

Notice of Intended Action

Twenty-five interested persons, a governmental subdivision, an agency or association of 25 or more persons may demand an oral presentation hereon as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.4(1)“b.”

Notice is also given to the public that the Administrative Rules Review Committee may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this proposed action under section 17A.8(6) at a regular or special meeting where the public or interested persons may be heard.

Pursuant to the authority of Iowa Code section 256.7(5), the State Board of Education hereby proposes to amend Chapter 24, “Community College Accreditation,” Iowa Administrative Code.

The proposed amendments in Items 2 and 4 conform the rules to 2011 Iowa Acts, Senate File 470, sections 9 and 6, respectively. The other amendments are proposed to reflect the new accreditation process being put into place by the Higher Learning Commission, including the phasing out of accreditation by the Program to Evaluate Academic Quality. The Department discussed the proposed amendments with representatives from the following stakeholder groups: Iowa Association of Community College Presidents (IACCP), Iowa Association of Community College Trustees (IACCT), Community College Chief Academic Officers, Iowa Arts and Sciences Administrators (IASA), Community College Career and Technical Deans/Directors, Iowa State Education Association (ISEA), Community College Continuing Education Deans/Directors, Community College Business Officers, Iowa Community College Student Services Administrators (ICCSA), Community College Faculty Advisory Committee, Community College Accreditation Advisory Committee, and Community College Professional Development Advisory Committee.

Substantially similar amendments were published under Notice of Intended Action as **ARC 9685B** in the August 24, 2011, Iowa Administrative Bulletin. Following publication of the Notice, the IACCP wrote to the Department to ask that Item 1 be further amended and that Item 3 be added. Notice of Termination for **ARC 9685B** is published herein as **ARC 9900B**, and this rule making incorporates amendments that reflect the requests of the IACCP.

An agencywide waiver provision is provided in 281—Chapter 4.

Interested individuals may make written comments on the proposed amendments on or before January 3, 2012, at 4:30 p.m. Comments on the proposed amendments should be directed to Colleen Hunt, Bureau Chief, Bureau of Adult, Career, and Community College Education, Iowa Department of Education, Second Floor, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146; telephone (515)281-0319; E-mail colleen.hunt@iowa.gov; or fax (515)281-6544.

A public hearing will be held on January 3, 2012, from 3 to 4 p.m. in the State Board Room, Second Floor, Grimes State Office Building, East 14th Street and Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa, at which time persons may present their views either orally or in writing. Any persons who intend to attend the public hearing and have special requirements, such as those related to hearing or mobility impairments, should advise the Department of Education of specific needs by calling (515)281-3125.

After analysis and review of this rule making, no impact on jobs has been found.

These amendments are intended to implement 2011 Iowa Acts, Senate File 470, sections 6 and 9.

The following amendments are proposed.

ITEM 1. Amend rule 281—24.4(260C) as follows:

281—24.4(260C) Accreditation components and criteria—Higher Learning Commission. In order to be accredited by the state board of education and maintain accreditation status, a community college must meet the accreditation criteria of the Higher Learning Commission and additional state standards. Documents and materials provided in accordance with the accreditation requirements of the Higher Learning Commission shall also be provided to the department for the state accreditation process. ~~Accreditation shall be maintained either by the Program to Evaluate Academic Quality (PEAQ)~~

or the alternative Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) process. The Higher Learning Commission criteria for accreditation are as follows:

24.4(1) *Mission and integrity.* The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

a.—The organization's mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization's commitments.

b.—In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

c.—Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.

d.—The organization's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

e.—The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

24.4(2) *Preparing for the future.* The organization's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

a.—The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

b.—The organization's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening the program's quality in the future.

c.—The organization's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

d.—All levels of planning align with the organization's mission, thereby enhancing the organization's capacity to fulfill that mission.

24.4(3) *Student learning and effective teaching.* The organization provides evidence of student learning and effective teaching that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

a.—The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

b.—The organization values and supports effective teaching.

c.—The organization creates effective learning environments.

d.—The organization's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

24.4(4) *Acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge.* The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

a.—The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.

b.—The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

c.—The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

d.—The organization provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

24.4(5) *Engagement and service.* As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

a.—The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

b.—The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

c.—The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on the organization for service.

d.—Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.

~~24.4(6) Documentation.~~ Documents and materials provided in accordance with the accreditation requirements of the Higher Learning Commission shall also be provided to the department for the state accreditation process.

ITEM 2. Amend paragraph **24.5(2)“a”** as follows:

~~a. College parallel or transfer Arts and sciences.~~ The full-time teaching load of an instructor in college parallel or transfer programs arts and sciences courses shall be 15 credit hours within a traditional semester or the equivalent and shall not exceed a maximum of 16 credit hours within a traditional semester or the equivalent. An instructor may also have a an additional teaching assignment outside of the normal school hours beyond the maximum academic workload, provided the instructor consents and the community college administration mutually consent to this additional assignment and the total workload does not exceed the equivalent of ~~18~~ 22 credit hours within a traditional semester or the equivalent thereof.

ITEM 3. Amend paragraph **24.5(5)“d”** as follows:

~~d. Library or learning resource center.~~ A library or learning resource center shall be planned as part of the master campus plan and space made for library or learning resource center services within the initial construction. The library or learning resource center shall be adequately staffed with qualified professionals and skilled nonprofessional personnel. The library or learning resource center materials collection of a community college shall be accessible and adequate in size and scope to serve effectively the number and variety of programs offered and the number of students enrolled, including students enrolled at distance and satellite sites. The library or learning resource center materials shall show evidence of having been selected by faculty as well as professional library or learning resource staff and shall be kept up-to-date. The budget of the library or learning resource center shall be appropriate for the programs and services offered by the community college.

ITEM 4. Amend subrule 24.5(6) as follows:

24.5(6) Strategic planning. The community college shall prepare a ~~five-year~~ strategic plan at least once every five years to guide the college and its decision making. ~~Consideration shall be given to the five-year statewide strategic plan, as required by Iowa Code section 256.31(4)(a), in the development of the college's strategic plan.~~

ITEM 5. Amend subparagraph **24.5(7)“b”(7)** as follows:

(7) Specific activities that ensure that faculty attain and demonstrate instructional competencies and knowledge in their subject or technical areas. It is recommended that the plan identify faculty minimum competencies and explain the method or methods of determining and assessing competencies. It is recommended that the plan contain procedures for reporting faculty progress. It is recommended that faculty be notified at least once a year of their progress in attaining competencies. ~~It is recommended that the plan include policies and provisions for length of provisional status for faculty who do not meet the minimum standards in Iowa Code section 260C.48. It is recommended that provisional status of individual faculty members not exceed five years.~~

ITEM 6. Amend paragraph **24.5(7)“c,”** introductory paragraph, as follows:

~~c.~~ The department of education shall notify the community college when the department requires that a modified quality faculty plan be submitted. The department shall review the plan during the state accreditation ~~on-site visits~~ evaluations to ensure each community college's compliance and progress in implementing a quality faculty plan as approved by the local board of directors. The department shall review the following:

ITEM 7. Amend paragraph **24.6(1)“b”** as follows:

~~b.~~ The department of education shall conduct ~~an a comprehensive~~ on-site accreditation evaluation of each community college ~~during the same academic year as the evaluation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools on a ten-year interval.~~ An interim evaluation midway between comprehensive evaluations shall also be conducted. The department shall prepare a staggered evaluation schedule which sets no more than three comprehensive or interim evaluations in any one year. No comprehensive or interim evaluation shall be required for continued

accreditation prior to a community college's first evaluation under the schedule. The department shall have the authority to conduct focus evaluation visits as needed.

ITEM 8. Amend paragraph **24.6(4)“a”** as follows:

a. Accreditation granted. Continuation of accreditation, if granted, shall be for a ~~term consistent with the term of accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools~~ ten-year term; however, approval for a lesser term may be granted by the state board of education if the board determines that conditions so warrant.